

## 2 Kings 23 – Thursday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016

2 Kings 23 - 1 Now the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. 2 The king went up to the house of the LORD with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant which had been found in the house of the LORD. 3 Then the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant.

- The chapter begins with the impact of God's Word on the part of Josiah who took heed to it with a tender and teachable heart.
- It's interesting to note Josiah himself read the words of the Book of the Covenant so that all the people small and great heard it.
- It's also interesting to note that the people, of their own volition, chose to follow Josiah's lead and commit themselves to do this.

4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. 5 Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun, to the moon, to the constellations, and to all the host of heaven. 6 And he brought out the wooden image from the house of the LORD, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground it to ashes, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people. 7 Then he tore down the ritual booths of the perverted persons that were in the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the wooden image. 8 And he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba; also he broke down the high places at the gates which were at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were to the left of the city gate. 9 Nevertheless the priests of the high places did not come up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they ate unleavened bread among their brethren. 10 And he defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter pass through the fire to Molech. 11 Then he removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-Melech, the officer who was in the court; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. 12 The altars that were on the roof, the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, the king broke down and pulverized there, and threw their dust into the Brook Kidron. 13 Then the king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, which were on the south of the Mount of Corruption, which Solomon king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the people of Ammon. 14 And he broke in pieces the sacred pillars and cut down the wooden images, and filled their places with the bones of men.

- To me, this is textbook when it comes to the change that takes place once the Word of God has been both heard and heeded.
- Actually, there's a progression of sorts starting from the discovery of God's Word, to the tender heart that receives God's Word.
- Then, when there's genuine repentance this type of revival usually ensues such that sinful things are removed and destroyed.

One commentator takes it a step further writing, "Josiah's reforms did not only remove sinful things, but also the sinful people that promoted and permitted these sinful things. The idols that filled the temple did not get there or stay there on their own—there were idolatrous priests who were responsible for these sinful practices. Any thorough reformation can not only deal with sinful things; it must also deal with sinful people. If sinful people are not dealt with, they will quickly bring back the sinful things that were righteously removed."

15 Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down; and he burned the high place and crushed it to powder, and burned the wooden image. 16 As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs that were there on the mountain. And he sent and took the bones out of the tombs and burned them on the altar, and defiled it according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. 17 Then he said, "What gravestone is this that I see?" So the men of the city told him, "It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and proclaimed these things which you have done against the altar of Bethel." 18 And he said, "Let him alone; let no one move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came from Samaria. 19 Now Josiah also took away all the shrines of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the LORD to anger; and he did to them according to all the deeds he had done in Bethel. 20 He executed all the priests of the high places who were there, on the altars, and burned men's bones on them; and he returned to Jerusalem.

- Last week we looked at a prophecy concerning Josiah from some three hundred years prior to his birth and his becoming king.
- The reason I mention it again this week is because the prophecy had specificity as it relates to what we read here about bones.
- Namely, that Josiah would defile the graves of these false gods of idolatrous worship by burning the bones of men on them.

**1 Kings 13:1–2 (NKJV)** — 1 And behold, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. 2 Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, “O altar, altar! Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men’s bones shall be burned on you.’”

21 Then the king commanded all the people, saying, “Keep the Passover to the LORD your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant.” 22 Such a Passover surely had never been held since the days of the judges who judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. 23 But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was held before the LORD in Jerusalem. 24 Moreover Josiah put away those who consulted mediums and spiritists, the household gods and idols, all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD. 25 Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.

- Here we see the aforementioned progression with Josiah continue as evidenced by the observing of the Feast of Passover.
- Also, we’re told Josiah, in his obedience to the Lord, turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might.
- So much so that there was no king like Josiah prior, nor was there any king who would arise after him that was like him in this.

- I suppose the question becomes, what about David? Wasn’t he a good king who we’re told was a man after God’s own heart?

Adam Clarke of this said, “David was a greater but not a better man than Josiah.”

**Matthew 22:37–40 (NIV)** — 37 Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

26 Nevertheless the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath, with which His anger was aroused against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked Him. 27 And the LORD said, “I will also remove Judah from My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, ‘My name shall be there.’ ” 28 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 29 In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went to the aid of the king of Assyria, to the River Euphrates; and King Josiah went against him. And Pharaoh Necho killed him at Megiddo when he confronted him. 30 Then his servants moved his body in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father’s place.

- Here the narrative only gives us a summary of the end of Josiah’s life, however, in 2 Chronicles 35:20-25, we have the details.
- Sadly, even Josiah, as great as he was, failed at the end of his life and as such, he becomes one of the 8 good kings who did.
- Actually, I would like to come back to this at the end of the chapter, and in so doing, talk about the nine good kings of Israel.

31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 32 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. 33 Now Pharaoh Necho put him in prison at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 34 Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Pharaoh took Jehoahaz and went to Egypt, and he died there. 35 So Jehoiakim gave the silver and gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give money according to the command of Pharaoh; he exacted the silver and gold from the people of the land, from every one according to his assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Necho. 36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Zebudah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. 37 And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

- Again, we have an evil king coming from a good king and as a result, the revival of King Josiah would come to an abrupt end.
- Then, we have another evil king by the name of Jehoiakim, who in some ways was even more evil than Jehoahaz before him.
- The prophet Jeremiah records the horrific description of one of the evil acts of Jehoiakim who burned the scroll of God’s word.

**Jeremiah 36:22–24 (NIV)** — 22 It was the ninth month and the king was sitting in the winter apartment, with a fire burning in the firepot in front of him. 23 Whenever Jehudi had read three or four columns of the scroll, the king cut them off with a scribe’s knife and threw them into the firepot, until the entire scroll was burned in the fire. 24 The king and all his attendants who heard all these words showed no fear, nor did they tear their clothes.

- Be that as it may, let’s now look at the nine good kings of Israel before we bring our time together in God’s Word to a close.
- What follows is an overview of a study I did from many years back when I first heard this teaching from pastor Damian Kyle.
- I hope to do a more in depth teaching on these nine good kings when we get to our study through first and second Chronicles.

KING	WHY	HOW THEY FELL	LESSON
David	David was probably the greatest King Israel ever had. He was a passionate man after God's own heart, (Acts 13:22). He is listed in the hall of fame of faith in Hebrews 11.	David didn't control his passions and fell in His area of greatest strength. He didn't guard his heart.	Control your passions before they control you.
Asa	One of Judah's best kings, (1 Kings 15:9-15). He relied upon the Lord and defeated the Ethiopian army against seemingly impossible odds.	He relied on and bribed Ben-hadad the king of Aram who severed his alliance with King Baasha in order to defeat this rival army of the northern kingdom. He didn't rely on the Lord.	Rely on the Lord not your own savvy.
Jehoshaphat	He was bold like his father "Asa" and was victorious militarily. He created an educational and legal infrastructure for the nation of Israel.	In his enterprising cleverness, he got mixed up in a friendship with an evil King name Ahab, and even let his son Jehoram marry his daughter Athaliah. He didn't annihilate idolatry and failed in a business partnership with Ahaziah. Interesting how these people are attracted to him because they see the blessing of the Lord on His life. They get him alone and manipulate him and he went against the check the Lord gave him in his spirit.	Obey that check in your spirit. Manipulating people will be attracted to you.
Joash	He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord while the priest Jehoiada (and his advisor) was alive. He accomplished much as it relates to repairing the Temple.	Joash listened to Jehoida's advice, but Jehoida had the only voice in his life, so much so that when he died, Joash didn't know what to do. He listened to bad counsel and it led to him down the wrong path and into evil. He was ultimately killed by his own officials and will go down as a king who fell into a trap of acting on bad counsel, because "he listened to them".	Don't listen to ungodly counsel. There's safety in the multitude of counselors.
Amaziah	Was victorious over the Edomites. Followed his father Joash's good example.	Because Amaziah became arrogant, he meddled to his own hurt. He was even told by an evil king to stay out of his business and stay at home because he was asking for trouble. This ultimately cost him dearly and led to his downfall.	Don't meddle. Mind your own business.
Uzziah	He was a warrior and a skillful builder, leader, and organizer. He became very powerful and successful.	Uzziah becomes proud and arrogantly promotes himself to the place of a priest. The priests whom he usurped confront him. Uzziah in his self-promoting ambition resists them and is struck with leprosy.	Don't be self-promoting and push down doors.
Hezekiah	Hezekiah initiated reform and revival. He had an intimate relationship with the Lord and copied several chapters of Solomon's Proverbs (25:1).	Hezekiah shows off his wealth to the messengers from Babylon showing little concern for the future because now Babylon would conquer them. He even implies that all the wealth was because of his own merit as if to take credit for that which the Lord had done for him.	Give God all the credit, don't boast thinking it's you.
Josiah	Josiah turned to the LORD with all his heart soul and strength, obeying all the laws of Moses.	Josiah was overly zealous in his battling against King Neco of Egypt. He wouldn't listen to what God was saying through King Neco and went against him in opposition to the Lord. This mistake costs him his life.	Selfish ambition deafens us to God's voice.
Jotham	He was a powerful King who did extensive building. He was the only one who did not sin against the Lord or make any costly mistakes at the end of his life as king.	Jotham's ways were always before the Lord, such that he wouldn't do anything his way, rather he would only to what he knew was God's way and God's will. He was able to do because he stayed in the Word and it lit his way showing him which way God wanted him to do or not do something. He was a doer not just a hearer of God's Word.	Present your plans and ways to the Lord but let God have His own way, as I'm the clay.